

REPORT

ON

NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending the 8th November 1902.

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I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 1st November refers to the reply given in Parliament by Lord George Hamilton to Sir S. King's question as to the importation of arms

Russia's activity.

and ammunition lately made from Germany by the Amir of Afghanistan. According to the Secretary of State for India and to Lord Cranborne, correspondence is going on between the British Government and Russia on the subject of Russia's proposals to establish closer and more direct relations with Afghanistan in regard to frontier affairs, but such relations are intended to be other than political, while as regards the importation of arms and military stores from Germany, the Amir is strictly within his treaty rights.

Some time ago the *Novoe Vremya* and other Russian newspapers warmly discussed the desirability, from the Russian point of view, of establishing commercial relations between their country and Afghanistan. It was probably at that time that the Russian Government addressed the British Cabinet on the subject, and one may well hazard the conjecture that the discussion started by the *Novoe Vremya* and other Russian journals was meant to be a feeler. All this clearly shows that Russia is protruding her lolling tongue for the purpose of devouring Afghanistan. Russia, it is true, is debarred by the treaty of 1895 from establishing any sort of relations on the Afghan frontier, but it does not appear probable that she will observe that treaty. For in the past she has more than once violated such engagements without scruple or hesitation. That on the present occasion she is prepared to disregard the treaty of 1895 may be easily inferred from the writings in the *Novoe Vremya* and other Russian newspapers. The existing situation offers many advantages to the Czar's Government. Russia has now obtained permission from the Sultan to despatch her men-of-war to the Mediterranean through the Black Sea. This cannot but make the English fleet in the Mediterranean somewhat uneasy. In Tibet, Russia enjoys the friendship of Dalai Lama, while in Persia the Shah is a puppet in her hands. She is trying her best to make a commercial treaty with Japan, and is at the same time making a demonstration in the Persian Gulf. This is not all. France, who is Russia's friend and England's enemy, has succeeded in making up her differences with the Sultan of Morocco, although she has retained possession of all the territories which she had wrested from the latter. Morocco, it should be remembered, commands the entrance to the Mediterranean where the island of Corsica is guarded by French men-of-war. With Siam France is now at peace. The situation is further complicated by the outbreak of troubles in Somaliland and the continuance of disorder in China. There is danger on all sides, and the political sky is overcast with clouds. This is the opportunity for Russia, who is always on the look out for weak points in her adversary's political position. Of course, the powerful British Lion does not mind all this, and as soon as he awakes and sends forth his deep roar, the clouds will disperse and the sky will become clear. But the starving Indians cannot but contemplate with fear the prospect of a sanguinary war, and their prayer is that through the mercy of the Universal Mother, the source of all good, any such catastrophe may be averted.

2. To the *Roznama-i-Mukaddas Hablul Mateen* [Calcutta] of the 3rd November it seems that the Bagdad railway and the Persian railways will not in any way injure the interests of the British Government. Germany has undertaken to construct the Bagdad railway simply for the good of the human race. It is said that Russia is constructing the Persian railways, chiefly because she intends to make use of it for the purpose of invading India. Russia herself, however, knows full well that it is beyond her power to invade India.

The Bagdad railway and the Persian railways.

BANGAVASI,
Nov. 1st, 1902.

ROZNAMA-I-MUKAD-
DAS HABLUL
MATEEN,
Nov. 3rd, 1902.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

SRI SRI VISHNU-
PRIYA-O-
ANANDA-BAZAR
PATRIKA,
Oct. 29th, 1902.

3. The *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 29th October has the following:—

Questions framed by the Police Commission.

The first question that the Police Commission propose to put to a person desiring to give evidence before them refers to the opportunities he has had of acquiring such experience of the working of the different branches of the Police Department as might entitle him to express an opinion on the subject of enquiry. One cannot help feeling amused by the question, for it is a fact that almost everybody finds opportunities of making himself acquainted with the police. There are few people in India who have not been oppressed or harassed by the police or seen others oppressed or harassed by it. The Commission's next question has reference to the manner in which the police is doing its work and the opinion which the public entertain of that work. Now, the answer to this question, about which there is no difference or dispute, is that the police is destroying the peace and happiness of the Indians. The next question is, what branches of the police stand in need of urgent reform and how is such reform to be effected? The answer to this is that the police is so utterly rotten that what is needed is a thorough and radical reform and not a partial overhauling. As regards the way in which the police may be so constituted as to become a beneficial institution promoting the public peace and tranquillity and the people's loyalty to the British Government, the writer ventures to make the following observations:—

(a) The connection between the police and the District Magistrate should be severed. So many and so various are the duties which are now entrusted to that officer, that he is not always able to satisfactorily discharge even such of them as strictly appertain to his own office. The fact that the District Magistrate is the head of the district police naturally enough makes him in a manner purposely blind to its defects and shortcomings and not unoften leads him to defend its conduct even when perfectly aware of its guilt. Formerly, when the police was not under his direct control, it feared to act so recklessly as at present, and it was also possible for him to do his judicial work in an impartial manner. In Calcutta the Magistrate has no direct relations with the police, and consequently does not identify himself with the cases which the police sends up.

Following the example of Calcutta, there should be in the mufassal a Commissioner of Police entrusted with the charge of three or four districts, and following the Calcutta practice, under which no case can be instituted by the police without the previous sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, the mufassal police should be declared incompetent to initiate a criminal prosecution without the previous sanction of the District Superintendent.

(b) The Commission want to know whether any offence now cognisable by the police should be made non-cognisable, and any now non-cognisable should be made cognisable. The question is really a very important one. The police now possesses powers of investigation in regard to certain offences, by the exercise of which it can, if so minded, ruin a respectable family, while there are offences in which it is extremely desirable that it should be vested with such powers. An example will serve to make the point clearer. There is a young widow in a respectable family. All of a sudden the police appears one day in the family dwelling-house and says to the members "a young widow belonging to this family has procured abortion and so there must be an investigation." Possibly the alleged occurrence had never taken place, and either some malicious person must have made such a report, or the police might have concocted the story in the expectation of obtaining a bribe. But no matter whether or no the charge is true, the people of the locality will not take the trouble to ascertain the truth, and as soon as it is noised abroad that the police has come to investigate a charge regarding the procuring of abortion, the family will be outcasted and excommunicated, will become the subject of common talk, and will very probably in the end, in its efforts to disprove the charge, find itself harassed, insulted, discredited, and even ruined.

Take another case. A charge of theft is one for police investigation. Whenever information of a theft is lodged at the thana, the question which is invariably asked by the police is whether or no any particular person is suspected of having committed the offence. If no one is suspected, the police either refuses to record any deposition or repairs to the place of occurrence and makes the person who has suffered by the theft pay it handsomely for the trouble to which he has put it. Again, if anybody is suspected and the charge cannot be brought home to him, the accuser runs the risk of being himself charged under section 221, Indian Penal Code, and may in the end find himself sent to jail under that section. In offences like these the police should not be given powers of investigation.

Yet another case may be taken. There is an unchaste woman in the house of a respectable person. While the police is present in the house for some reason or another, it transpires that a man has entered into her room. Now, the police cannot arrest the visitor, for his offence is one which is not cognisable by the police, and yet if a woman takes opium for the purpose of committing suicide, the police may arrest her. So there are many offences in regard to which the police should not be given, while there are many others in which it should be given, powers of investigation.

4. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 30th October has the following:—

The constitution of the Police Commission.

No Bengal man has been taken as a member of the Police Commission. It is therefore doubtful how far the Commission will be able to write a successful report. The Maharaja of Darbhanga, the leading zamindar of Behar, is one of the members; but it is not known how much knowledge he has of the working of the police. If the Viceroy had really wanted to reform the police, he would have appointed efficient Bengalis as members.

BASUMATI,
Oct. 30th, 1902.

5. Referring to the case of Dr. Mitra of Asansol, the same paper says

Ill treatment of the Asansol doctor.

that according to the correspondent of the *Bengalee* newspaper, Mr. Biswas, District Superintendent of Police, Burdwan, intended to take the accused doctor all the way from Asansol to Raniganj on foot, and it was only at the request of other people that he relented and allowed the accused to travel at his own cost in a third class railway carriage, and refused to allow him to travel second class, though the complainant, the railway driver Bartlett, was taken to Raniganj in a second class carriage at Government's expense. One can hardly believe all this. It is said that the doctor was treated by the District Superintendent in this way at the instigation of the European railway employes at Asansol.

BASUMATI.

6. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 31st October says

A complaint against the Midnapore police.

that at 11 A.M. of the 7th October last, a son of Dinu Jana, of Bera, within the jurisdiction of the Bhagwanpur thana in the Midnapore district, was drowned in a tank. At 5 P.M. the same day, information was sent to the thana and the Sub-Inspector ordered the dead child's father to bring the dead body in a boat to the thana for inspection in the course of the night, and also to bring with him four respectable villagers. This was a hard order for a common labourer to carry out. Still the poor man arranged to carry it out. But when at midnight, as he was about to start, he asked the village chaukidar to accompany him to the thana, that man refused to do so. He had therefore no alternative but to start without the chaukidar, and he arrived at the thana at 6 A.M. the next morning.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 31st, 1902.

Kshetra Bar of Netura was harassed in the same way when his daughter was drowned some time ago.

7. The Bankura correspondent of the same paper says that on the

A murder in the Bankura district.

night of the 24th September last a trader of Bansi in the Bankura district, named Dwijabar Das, while going to Bankura town in his cart, was dragged down by four men near a jungle and brutally stabbed with a dagger, and, from the effect of the wounds inflicted, died in Bankura Hospital on the 29th of the same month. The offenders have not yet been apprehended. The investigation of the case ought to be taken from the hands of the local

HITAVADI.

police and placed in those of the police of some other district or of some detective from Calcutta.

NAVA YUG,
Nov. 1st, 1902.

8. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 1st November fails to understand what led the Excise authorities to grant licenses for the sale of toddy to thirty or thirty-five Parsis in a single village, named Haltu, within the jurisdiction of the Talaganj thana in the 24-Parganas district. The men possess only wholesale licenses, but they do not hesitate to carry on retail business also. As a consequence, turbulent and rowdy crowds of toddy-drinkers often disturb the peace of the locality in which the shops are situate. A visit to the place any Saturday or Sunday will convince any Excise officer of the truth of the above allegation.

When such things are allowed to take place within a few miles of the head-quarters station of the 24-Parganas district, people can easily imagine how lax the excise administration is in the distant mufassal.

(d)—Education.

SANJIVANI,
Oct. 30th, 1902.

9. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 30th October has the following:—

The English people, who for want of proper education are themselves losing their superiority among the civilised nations of the earth, are no longer fit to occupy the position of teachers or preceptors of the Indian people. It is this unfitness of the English people as educationists which is clearly seen in the recommendations of the Indian Universities Commission, some of which are of so impracticable a nature that, if adopted, they will bring about the ruin of the people of India. England succeeded in some measure so long as the question was one of imparting only book-learning. But the day is gone when book-learning was the one means of attaining to greatness. In the new educational era that has dawned upon the civilised world, the ideal education is not only the education of the mental faculties but also the mastery and enforcement of the truths of practical science. The nation which can come nearest to this ideal in its educational system is destined to become the greatest nation in the world. Germany and America are following this ideal and have succeeded in beating other nations. England is not doing so, and England is fast losing the industrial and commercial superiority she once enjoyed among the civilised nations. England is losing her position because she makes no attempt to impart technical education to her educated men. Germany has established a very large number of schools to impart practical scientific education to distinguished scholars coming out of her Universities. England does not possess a single technical school like that existing in Charlottenburg in Germany. Can England, who is herself in such a backward and benighted condition, become India's teacher?

India will not be able to remove her misery without a reform of her educational system. But she has unfortunately got a blind man to act as her educational guide. How can one who is himself failing to succeed, teach others how to succeed? If Englishmen had understood the educational needs of the Indian people, the Universities Commission would have recommended—

- (1) that the Universities should make better provision for the teaching of history, literature, science, and mathematics;
- (2) that the best provision should be made for teaching practical science to educated young men;
- (3) that the Government of India should spend twenty-five crores of rupees every year for the spread of higher education;
- (4) that none but eminent and experienced professors should be brought out from England on salaries ranging from three to four thousand rupees a month; and
- (5) that an industrial school, on the model of the Charlottenburg school in Germany, should be attached to every Indian college.

The truth is that the Universities Commission had not a high ideal before them. What they did was to consider a few small matters in connection with University education, and they taxed all their powers to devise means for reducing even the small measure of high education which is now imparted

in India. Considering the small progress that education has made in this country, it does not speak well for the Commission's knowledge of the country to have made the recommendations they have put forth.

Now that a strong agitation is going on on this subject and Lord Curzon is considering what should be done in the matter, the writer begs to submit the following proposals:—

- (1) Government should spend a fourth part of its revenues on education.
- (2) The pay of educational officers, from *pathsala* teachers to college professors, should be doubled.
- (3) None but youths who have had a distinguished educational career should be appointed as teachers.
- (4) The courses of study should be gradually made harder than at present.
- (5) In connection with every college there should be established industrial classes teaching such branches of industry as can be most conveniently taught in the locality.
- (6) Eminent professors should be brought out from Europe and America for the industrial schools.
- (7) Not less than twenty-five Indian youths should be sent out to Europe and America every year to receive industrial education.

It is true reforms like the above will require a large increase of expenditure, but no consideration of "rupees, annas and pies" should be allowed to stand in the way of an educational reform which has become imperatively necessary in India.

10. The same paper has the following:—

The Government of India on the recommendations of the Universities Commission.

In its letter to the Local Governments inviting their opinion on the recommendations of the Universities Commission, the Government of India has expressed the view that the education imparted

in colleges which charge small fees is necessarily worse than that which is imparted in colleges which charge high fees. But even the child knows that an article purchased in a shop which charges very high prices is not, as a matter of course, of a superior quality to one purchased at a lower price in another shop. So, it is not true that the highest college fee secures the best education. In Bengal, the Presidency College in Calcutta charges the highest fee. But can any one claim for every one of its professors qualifications superior to those of the professors employed in the Metropolitan, the City, the Ripon, and the Bangavasi College? Students, at any rate, who know all these colleges, will not consider such a claim just or fair. It is true the efficiency of a college greatly depends on its income. But which college is likely to have the larger income—that which has a very large number of pupils at a comparatively small fee, or that which teaches a very small number of pupils at a large fee? But income is not the sole test of the efficiency of a college.

It is a matter for congratulation that the Government of India has vetoed the recommendation for the abolition of second grade colleges, provided they are maintained in an efficient condition.

The Government has, however, gone a step further than the Commission in the matter of fixing an age limit for Entrance candidates. The Commission recommended 15 years as the minimum age, but Government wants to fix it at 16.

No provision will be made for advanced teaching in the Universities so long as money is not forthcoming. Government always holds its tongue when it is asked to pay more money.

11. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 30th October says—

The Government of India on the Report of the Universities Commission.

In forwarding to the Local Governments the Report of the Universities Commission, together with the dissent of Mr. Justice Gurudas Banerjee, the Viceroy has issued a circular letter of his own.

The views of His Excellency are hopeful and would have been more so if he had rejected the recommendation of the Commission with respect to the increase of college fees.

SANJIVANI,
Oct. 20th, 1902.

BASUMATI,
Oct. 30th, 1902.

JYOTI,
Oct. 30th, 1902.

12. The *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 30th October says:—

More Sub-Inspectors or Schools? It is reported that the District Boards of Bengal will appoint 63 additional Sub-Inspectors of Schools. Of the six to be appointed in the Chittagong Division, three will be for Tippera, two for Chittagong and one for Noakhali. As education had never before suffered for want of inspection, it is not proper to devote the Government grant to the District Boards to appointment of more Sub-Inspectors. When aided schools had not been made over to District Boards there was only one Sub-Inspector in all Chittagong, save the Cox's Bazar subdivision. In the place of that one Sub-Inspector there are now three, besides several Inspecting Pandits. It is therefore better to increase the number of schools instead of the number of Sub-Inspectors. The sum of two hundred rupees which two additional Sub-Inspectors will cost per month may be sufficient to maintain 15 middle English and middle Vernacular schools. Want of schools is a want which has to be removed not only in Chittagong, but also in the backward districts of Tippera and Noakhali.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 31st, 1902.

13. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 31st October fails to see the real import of the Bengal Government's circular relating to the examination of teachers in English idiom and pronunciation.

The pronunciation circular. Is it right to consider an Indian ignorant of the English tongue simply because he cannot pronounce his English words like Englishmen or cannot use certain English idioms correctly? English is the mother tongue of Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Americans, but do all of them pronounce English words alike? Can one also find no difference in the pronunciation, etc., even of the European Directors of Public Instruction employed in the different provinces of India? Can any one, again, say that the Europeans educated in the British Colonies, who may be appointed pronunciation examiners in India, pronounce English words alike? If not, is it not madness, pure and simple, to apply the proposed pronunciation test to the Indians, whose mother-tongue is not English? The writer has, of course, nothing to say if the proposed rule has been framed with the object of excluding native teachers from Indian schools and filling those schools with Eurasian teachers. But he is unwilling to attribute motives to Government. What he believes is that no harm will be done to the cause of English education in this country if Government does not enforce the pronunciation circular. It is hoped that the authorities will reconsider the matter.

AL PUNCH,
Nov. 1st, 1902.

14. *Al Punch* [Bankipore] of the 1st November says that if the Universities of India are reformed according to the recommendations made by the Universities Commission, they will be able to turn out a large number of good students every year.

The Universities Commission. It is only for want of farsightedness that some people are opposing the proposals of the Commission in season and out of season. They ought to know that the India of to-day is no more the India of the time when English education was first introduced into it. The majority of educated people are now decidedly of opinion that unless a student can use his learning in his future life, his education is useless, and that unless there be an overwhelming majority of highly educated and influential officials in the Universities, no good result can be expected from them. As for the high expenses which the students will have to bear, our opinion is that it is the look out of the people for whom the Universities are intended to provide scholarships and endowments for the benefit of the students. It is urgently necessary that such colleges and schools as have been set up by mercenary people should not be affiliated to a University.

TRIPURA
HITAISHI,
Nov. 4th, 1902.

15. The *Tripura-Hitaishi* [Tippera] of the 4th November has the following:—

More Sub-Inspectors of Schools. In the Chittagong Division three more Sub-Inspectors of Schools will be appointed, namely two in Chittagong and one in Noakhali. But as there is no want of inspection, it were better to devote the Government grant to raising the salary of the teachers rather than to providing salaries and travelling allowances for additional Sub-Inspectors. The grant received by the patshalas do not enable them to entertain the services of competent teachers.

(e) — *Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.*

16. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 30th October complains that though the Calcutta Municipality conducts itself in a very high-handed manner in the realisation of rates and in the enforcement of its rules and bye-laws against rate-payers, it has done nothing as yet to provide them with a sufficient supply of filtered water, nor is it taking any notice of the unsatisfactory manner in which the native quarters of the town are being lighted since the introduction of incandescent lamps. Not to speak of smaller streets, even Chitpore Road, Grey Street, and Beadon Street are being lighted in a most unsatisfactory manner.

BASUMATI,
Oct. 30th, 1902.

17. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 1st November says that in order to prevent the sale of unwholesome kid's flesh in the native meat shops in Calcutta, the Calcutta Municipality prohibited the slaughter of kids in shops, and directed the shop-owners to have them slaughtered at the Municipal slaughter-house, a stamp impressed upon the meat showing that it has been so slaughtered. But this order is not strictly complied with, and the flesh of sickly, ill-fed animals, not slaughtered as directed, is sold with impunity on the strength of illegal gratification given to the municipal officers.

NAVA YUG,
Nov. 1st, 1902.

18. A correspondent of the *Tripura Hitaishi* [Comilla] of the 4th November says that the people of Nabinagar in the Tippera district are very sorry at the transfer of Dr. Ambika Charan Chakravarti, who was in charge of the local charitable dispensary. During the four years that the doctor was in the place, he earned the golden opinion of all by his kindness to the poor. The people of the place, and especially the subscribers to the dispensary fund, were greatly disappointed at the refusal of their request to keep Ambika Babu in Nabinagar some time longer.

TRIPURA
HITAISHI,
Nov. 4th, 1902.

(g) — *Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.*

19. A correspondent of the *Tripura Hitaishi* [Tippera] of the 28th October says:—
Most of the roads in Chandpur are in a wretched condition. In the rainy season people wade through deep mire and their feet slip in crossing bamboo and palm bridges, and they lose all the eatables in their possession.

TRIPURA
HITAISHI,
Oct. 28th, 1902.

About a mile and a quarter, near the middle of the old road from Farakkabad Rajbari, joining the District Board road from Chandpur to Noakhali at village Dhanna, is in want of repairs.

20. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 31st October publishes the following complaints from correspondents:—
(1) The intermediate class carriage which is attached to the up and down local trains from Poradah to Rajbari on the Eastern Bengal State Railway is never lighted at night, and wicked passengers consequently commit mischief by easing themselves on the benches without being detected. These two trains never reach their destination in time, and are never visited by any ticket examiner.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 31st, 1902.

(2) Babu Mathura Nath Kar, an overseer on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, was coming to Calcutta with a companion from the Manikdaha steamer station to Calcutta by the Bengal Central Railway on the 15th August last. At Manikdaha the luggage belonging to him and his companion were not weighed, but when they reached Khulna and were about to enter the train, a railway officer wanted to weigh their luggage, and took away their tickets. The officer then held a brief consultation with a man who appeared to be a railway constable, and the latter came and asked the correspondent for blackmail. This being refused, the officer went into his office room and refused either to weigh the luggage or to return the tickets. A few minutes before the train started he came out of his office and demanded their tickets. On being told that the tickets were with him, he made a show of search for them and having weighed the luggage realised Re. 1-4 as luggage fare from the correspondent and his companion, without allowing the ordinary concession.

PRATIVASI,
Nov. 3rd, 1902.

21. A correspondent writes from Chaugachha in the *Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 3rd November:—

A railway complaint.

The two trains which the Bengal Central Railway Company are running morning and evening from and to Calcutta have done immense good to passengers who go by steamer from Jhinkergachha to Kapilmuni and Chandpur. But the steamer employes being not on good terms with the railway servants, people sending goods by the steamer suffer much inconvenience, and fruits become rotten on account of parcels reaching Calcutta late. The traders of Chandpur and Chaugachha therefore intend to stop sending goods by steamer. This grievance will not be remedied if the railway authorities do not check their servants at Jhinkergachha.

NIHAR,
Nov. 4th, 1902.

22. A correspondent of the *Nihar* [Contai] of the 4th November makes the following complaints in regard to the portion of the Midnapore canal lying between Geonkhali and Contai:—

Complaints in connection with the Midnapore canal.

(1) Although it is against rule for men towing boats up and down the canal to use the same bank of the canal, they always do so without any notice being taken of their conduct by the canal authorities. The practice is fraught with danger and ought to be stopped.

(2) The canal embankments are in a wretched condition, being full of small vegetation, jungle and deep ruts which seriously inconvenience those who tow boats.

(3) There ought to be fixed time-tables shewing at what hours each day each lock will be opened for the passage of boats. The want of such time-tables seriously inconveniences boat passengers.

(4) It is not to the credit of the authorities that the Geonkhali lock has been allowed to remain in a disordered state for a year, as was said by the canal officers.

(5) The lock gates in this canal were purposely provided with contrivances to admit of their being opened both at flow and ebb tide in order to let boats pass them at all hours of the day. Still the men in charge of the locks refuse to open them during high tide to the great inconvenience of boat passengers.

(6) Formerly, when steamers used to run on this canal, warning signals were kept at all submerged *chars* in the Haldi and Kalinagar rivers. But the discontinuance of these signals has become a source of danger to boats, especially during ebb tide. A boat carrying Babu Aghor Chand Bannerji, pleader of Contai, some time ago struck against one of these *chars* and sank.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

HITAVADI,
Oct. 31st, 1902.

23. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 31st October has the following:—

The Coronation Darbar—a *tamasa*.

Why does not the happy news that Edward VII has ascended the throne of England, and that consequently there will be rejoicings in India, fill his Indian subjects with delight and make them turn their eyes towards his representative? There will be fireworks and illuminations, and art exhibition and dinners for the poor, but why do not the subject people fill the skies with shouts of joy? Alas, with what heart shall we rejoice? Will only one day's full meal put a stop to the piteous wailings caused by a chronic want of food? Although unable to procure our daily bread, we have always complied with the requirements of the Sunset Law as regards the payment of our revenue assessments, and though in our solicitude to secure peace and happiness for ourselves and for the protection of life and honour we are sinking deeper and deeper in the sea of poverty, still we bear the expenses of the costly British administration. It is notorious that we are fond of pomp and pageants, and yet no hope springs in our breasts and no current of joy flows in our heart.

What loyal subject is there who will not rejoice on the occasion of a celebration in honour of the accession of Edward VII? But how opposed is this practice of the West to Indian usage, that the expenses of the celebration shall be borne not by the Sovereign but by his subjects!! For them there will be no mitigation of the revenue demand even for a month. Nor will they obtain any new privilege as a mark of royal favour. They will, in short,

be no gainers in any way. The pomp and lavish outlay of money which will be so conspicuous in the Delhi Darbar will lead foreigners to form very high estimates of the happiness and prosperity of the Indians. But nobody will be able to see or know their true condition. For us there will be only a great *tamasa* at Delhi.

The concourse of visitors to the Darbar is expected to be so immense that the authorities are seriously considering the question of imposing restrictions on the free ingress and egress of the spectators. But it is not known whether the question as to how the Darbar may be made to leave a lasting impression in the Indian mind has yet received any attention. Has it ever struck the projector of the great celebration, the representative of the Sovereign, that at the conclusion of the Darbar people will forget all about the fireworks and the splendid exhibitions which had marked the occasion, and that they will not, after a little while, bestow a passing thought, even in pure inadvertance, on the grand ceremonial witnessed in Delhi? If, however, the opportunity be taken to repeal the Arms Act, that disgrace of English rule, to effect a separation of the judicial and executive functions or to inaugurate some work of public utility which may enhance the value of the Coronation Darbar in the estimation of the people, this lavish expenditure of money may possibly come to possess some justification in their eyes, and the Darbar too may succeed in finding a lasting place in their mind; otherwise Lord Curzon's Delhi Darbar will be regarded in the light of a *tamasa*, not much unlike Blondin's rope-dancing, Sylvester's magic, or Wilson's Circus.

24. The same paper is sorry to learn that Sir John Woodburn instead of making any improvement is getting worse. Last Friday, when he came down to Calcutta, he had to be carried to Belvedere in a *dooli* from the Majerhat station on the Budge-Budge Railway. The people of Bengal will be glad to hear of his speedy recovery.

His Honour has been confined to his bed for the last two months, and considering his age and the nature of his illness, it is not likely that he will be able to discharge his duties for some time to come. Public business in every department is accordingly at a standstill. It is strange that Lord Curzon has not thought fit to grant him leave and appoint a competent man as his *locum tenens*.

Would Lord Curzon have any answer to make to one who might suggest that in spite of Sir John Woodburn's serious illness, the question of his retirement or of granting him leave was not being raised because His Excellency did not wish to give Sir Henry Cotton an opportunity of succeeding to the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal?

25. The same paper says that everybody is astonished to find the *Englishman* newspaper so suddenly solicitous for the welfare of the people of India. But the writer cannot agree with that paper that the abolition of the income-tax will benefit the Indians. Why should a man, who has a sufficient income, not pay an income-tax? The *Englishman* would have secured everybody's sympathy if it had urged on the Government the necessity of raising the minimum assessable income, and not the total abolition of the income-tax. It might also have earned the gratitude of three hundred millions of Indians by proposing an abolition of the salt duty. But it could not see its way to do either this or that. What it is doing is to trample all principles of political economy under foot and agitate for the abolition of a tax which presses only on the rich. The truth is that the *Englishman's* heart is melted at the grievance of Europeans who draw fat salaries in this country, and have, in consequence, to pay large sums of money as income-tax, and it is seeking, in the name of the poor Indians, simply to relieve the European community of the burden of the tax. It is not at all wrong to levy an income-tax, even at higher rates than those now obtaining, from a rich man, whether European or Native. But it would be doing real good to the country, to exempt the poor middle class from the tax by raising the limit of the minimum assessable income from five hundred to one thousand rupees a year, a measure which will not affect the revenues of the country.

HITAVADI
Oct. 31st, 1902.

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26. The same paper writes as follows:—

The cost of the Delhi Darbar. To meet the objections raised by many native papers against the holding of a Darbar at Delhi on the ground of the huge waste of money which it would be sure to cause, the Viceroy made a speech sometime ago justifying such expenditure on the strength of the principles of Political Economy. It need hardly be said that the objectors have not been convinced at all by the Viceroy's ingenious defence, and that the present writer, among others, felt himself bound to expose the fallacy that underlay His Lordship's argument.

The subject has also engaged the attention of the English press. The *Daily News*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Westminster Gazette*, the *Daylight*, and other papers have taken to canvassing the question. A Calcutta correspondent of the *Daily News* expresses the fear that, like many other Indian estimates, this Darbar estimate fixing the probable expenditure at 40 lakhs of rupees may prove erroneous, and that the actual expenditure may be greatly in excess of the estimate. Indeed 40 lakhs seem to be an unduly low estimate of the cost of a Darbar which will last for eight days, and for which buildings, electric light and railways will have to be provided. The correspondent of the *Daily News* estimates the probable expenditure at 70 lakhs of rupees.

So many as a hundred Native Princes have been invited to the Darbar. They will have to spend a crore and a half between them on this festivity. The Nizam alone, we hear, will require ten special trains to carry his things to Delhi. He will have to pay 5 lakhs of rupees only for the house he has engaged at Delhi. By the Viceroy's order many Native Princes, it is rumoured, will have to bring horses and elephants to the Darbar to add to the magnificence of the pageant. The Raja of Mysore will have to spend five lakhs of rupees for the Darbar. Rumour has it that many native princes will have to deplete their exchequer to attend the Darbar. Even the Maharaja of Idar has had to borrow two lakhs of rupees for the purpose. Be that as it may, the expenditure which the Government of India and the Indian princes will have to incur between them will by no means be less than two crores of rupees.

If to this expenditure be added the cost of the passage of the Native princes and troops to England on the occasion of the Coronation, the cost of the celebrations in this country on the 8th and 9th August last, the cost of the celebrations which will take place on the 1st January next, and the cost of the Darbar to be held in Calcutta as a sequel to the Delhi Darbar, the total expenditure will come up to four crores of rupees. The *Daily News* estimates the total expenditure at from 4 to 4½ crores of rupees. So the Indians will have to spend from 4 to 4½ crores of rupees simply because Emperor Edward VII has ascended the throne. The waste of so much money belonging to India, which is suffering from plague and famine and is steeped in poverty, is characterised by the Liberal Press as an act of great cruelty.

"What will the famine-stricken Indians obtain in exchange for this four crores of rupees which they will spend to demonstrate their loyalty?" is the question which many are asking themselves just now. The *Pioneer* says that a special message for the Indians will come from the Sovereign on this occasion, which the Viceroy will communicate to the thankful population of this country. We cannot say whether the announcement of this message will fill the hearts of Indians with joy. But this announcement irresistibly reminds us of the sad fate of the Proclamation of 1858. How many of the pledges given in that Proclamation have been fulfilled? Nay, has it not even been pronounced "an impossible charter" in some official circles? The reader will remember that during the Ilbert Bill agitation, Justice Fitz James Stephen almost plainly declared that the Queen's Proclamation had no legal validity, since it had never been ratified by Parliament. Where will be the wonder if an argument like this, however cogent or forcible to Englishmen, appears absurd to a people who have deeply graven in their memory the traditions of hard vows faithfully fulfilled by their own national kings, Harischandra, Yudhisthir, and Ramchandra? We Indians do not understand legal subtleties; we are accustomed to place absolute faith in the promises of our kings. Official prestige will not be maintained in this country if the words of our Sovereign do not remain valid for ever. We therefore request Lord Curzon to see that the message which will be sent by

the Sovereign to his Indian subjects is ratified in proper time by Parliament. Without a royal message so ratified, the Delhi Darbar will appear to Indians only a huge sham.

27. With reference to the illness of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* [Calcutta] of the 31st October writes as follows:—

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR,
Oct. 31st, 1902.

Sir John Woodburn's illness.

By way of suggestion we wish to draw the attention of the Aides-de-Camp and Secretaries to His Honour to the fact that *Kaviraji* or *Hakimi* treatment is more efficacious than the Western in cases of dysentery. There are many eminent Kavirajes and Hakims in Calcutta, and they are likely to do good to His Honour if any of them is given a trial.

Several rumours are afloat concerning His Honour. Some of our contemporaries say that he has already submitted his resignation to the Viceroy. Placing faith in this report, some say that the Hon'ble Mr. Bolton and others say that Sir Henry Cotton, who has not as yet given up service, will succeed him. We are of opinion that whoever takes up the government, he will not be popular if he is not as sympathetic to the people as Sir John Woodburn.

28. The *Tripura Hitaishi* [Comilla] of the 4th November has the following:—

The Delhi Darbar unnecessary.

TRIPURA
HITAISHI,
Nov. 4th, 1902.

The Coronation of Edward VII is now an accomplished fact. It was witnessed by a large number Native Princes and notabilities, who, in response to official invitation, went to England to show their loyalty to the British Crown. The celebration proved a complete success. Why then should there be a repetition of it in India? The Sovereign will not come to this country. It is the Viceroy who will take the leading part in the function, which is sure to be attended with great pomp. But where is the necessity for this Darbar? Are all these vast preparations intended to serve as a demonstration of the power and resources of the British Government before the Indians, or as a means of promoting their loyalty to British rule? Considering the fact that the interests of India are indissolubly bound up with those of England, would it not have been better and more agreeable to all parties to have celebrated the Coronation in India on the day on which it was celebrated in England?

Where is the utility of this Darbar? Plague and famine are widely prevalent in Central India, Karachi and Bombay, and large numbers of men and women are every moment dying from starvation. There is wailing and lamentation on all sides caused by distress arising from scarcity of food. Why, then, is an Imperial Darbar going to be held at this time?

The Maharajas and Rajas and the zamindars whose recent visit to England as Coronation guests proved such a heavy drain on their resources, will again have to incur immense expenditure on account of the Delhi Darbar. Is there no distress among their tenantry? While these big people will make a gorgeous display of their jewels at the Darbar and spend their money like water, there will be nobody to attend to the deplorable condition of their estates. The Indians are now reduced to such a sorry plight that it would ill become a thoughtful statesman to invite them to make a lavish expenditure of their money on what at best must be an idle display.

Who, again, would profit by this expenditure? Of the crores that will be spent on the Durbar, how many rupees are likely to go into the pockets of the poor Indians? In the matter of transport of men and goods, the gainers will be the Railway Companies, or, in other words, foreigners. A brisk business will be done in the sale of diamonds and other precious stones, and the profits will go to enrich foreign merchants. European firms have been given contracts for upholstering the houses allotted to the invited Native Princes, and these firms, as well as European hotel proprietors, will have a merry time of it. As for the *nuzzer* which the Native Chiefs will give to the Viceroy, it will be made over to the Government treasury. Of course, at the Arts Exhibition to be opened in connection with the Darbar, there will be a small sale of native manufactures, and the celebration will bring some money to the local hackney carriage owners, bheestis, butchers, and coolies.

It seems to us that there is no necessity for a Darbar like that which is going to be held. The Indian is loyal to his Sovereign, and bows down at the mention of his name. The memory of the late Empress Victoria

is still adored by the people of this country. They revere and worship their Sovereign. So there is no need of such preparations in this country to evoke their loyalty. This poor country can ill afford such costly pageants. It is the duty of the Sovereign to direct the adoption of such measures as may remove the distress and destitution which prevails among the people generally and in particular among those who live in the village.

URIYA PAPERS.

UTKALDIPKA,
Oct. 25th, 1902.

29. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 25th October states that though there was universal rejoicing during the last Dussera vacation, yet its effect was somewhat

Rainfall in Orissa.

marred by the dry state of the weather and a consequent demand for a few showers of rain, without which the rice plants would die. Though the country has been blessed with a few such showers since the Dussera, their scattered nature and their short duration have rendered them ineffectual for all practical purposes. The Puri correspondent of the same paper says that unless it rains soon the standing crops will die.

UTKALDIPKA.

30. Referring to the expected visit of the Irrigation Commission to Cuttack, the same paper points out that the Commission will remain in the town for a single day and will therefore be able to collect very

The proposed visit of the Irrigation Commission to Cuttack.

little information on the spot. The writer recommends that as the demand for water is very great in the district, the Commission should inspect a few select places in the interior of the district.

UTKALDIPKA.

31. After giving a short account of the celebration of the Dussera in the Cuttack town, the same paper finds occasion to observe that unnecessary police interference was the cause of great annoyance to the general public.

The police in the Dussera celebration in Cuttack town.

The police stopped *mahatap* light before the images of the goddesses, though that light was not calculated to do any injury to any one.

UTKALDIPKA.

32. A correspondent of the same paper, by name Brindaban Satpasi, strongly recommends the creation of a branch post office in Dhalpur in the Dhenkanal Tributary State at a nominal cost of Rs. 2-4 per month, and hopes that the situation and importance of the village will draw the attention of the postal authorities to his modest but important proposal.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 8th November, 1902.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.